

Featured Collectors: Mary Nolan & Mike Fister

Our Featured Collectors for this issue are Mary Nolan and her fiancé Mike Fister of Simi Valley, California.

How did you get started collecting EFP?

I was just going to buy one vase. Just one – really. In late 2004, I had recently finished an embroidered wall hanging of a wisteria vine surrounding one of my favorite sayings. I was looking for something to complement it, and a vase seemed like the perfect fit. I'm not sure how I hit upon Ephraim as my pottery of choice, but I do know I'd heard of Ephraim before – they'd had a booth at the yearly Pasadena Heritage Arts and Crafts show that we attend, and I'd seen their ads in various magazines. I started watching the eBay® auctions for Ephraim pieces and when a crystalline purple Monona vase came up for bid, I knew that was the one. Well, that should have been the end of my pottery purchases, but by the time the Monona vase arrived in the mail, I just "had" to have the Fiddlehead vase, and called store after store until I found one (it had recently retired). That was the beginning. Slowly, more vases that I couldn't resist made their way into our home, and as they appeared, Mike began



to take an interest, finding the same appeal that had attracted me – the hand craftsmanship, the beautiful glazes, the nature inspired themes, and the fact that we would be supporting a contemporary Arts and Crafts pottery company.

Now it is our EFP collection, and we choose pieces together, either from the catalog or when attending shows.

Does your collection have a theme? Do you specialize in collecting a particular type or color of EFP?

We don't really have a single theme for our collection, but we have a number of "mini-themes", such as the bat vases, the bridges (I've become intrigued with how the bridge theme has evolved) and the *Harvest Time* collection. But I think overall our collection is fairly eclectic.

Do you have a favorite piece?

It is hard to choose one favorite, as each vase has memories of when we bought

it, but I do really like our Under the Eaves vase and our Alligator vases. Mike likes the Snowberry and Pussy Willow vases. And of course, our very first vase, the Monona, holds a special place in our hearts.

What is your favorite glaze?

One of the great things about having a partner in collecting is that each person brings their own preferences to the collection. I tend towards the antique green glazes, and initially our collection reflected that. As Mike joined in, he brought much diversity to the collection as he is interested in the more complex multi-color glazes. Now we have lots of colors and shapes to enjoy.

Which pieces are currently on your wish list?

If we could have any vase we wanted, we each like one from the *Bird Series* - Mike would like one of the owl vases and I would like the Whooping Crane vase. But that's purely wishful thinking! Actually, we are both waiting for the new catalog to see what new surprises are in store.

How and where is your EFP collection displayed?

We usually display our collection in groupings throughout the house. Most of our bat

vases are in my office, and we have other pieces in the entryway and living room. We are planning on having a special place in the kitchen for our *Harvest Time* collection once we get to our long-overdue kitchen remodel. For the picture that accompanies this article, we gathered our entire collection onto the server – it was quite impressive! But now the rest of the house looks bare.

What do you enjoy most about collecting EFP?

When we first started collecting EFP, we just loved the beauty of the vases and how they complemented our Arts and Crafts furnishings. But as we became more involved, we discovered a community of fellow EFP collectors and it has been wonderful to meet new friends. We look forward to seeing familiar faces at future shows and events, and keeping in touch through the *EFP Collectors Society* web page.

Do you have other hobbies or interests?

In addition to collecting Ephraim, we have a large fruit and vegetable garden, and every year we plant about 35 varieties of heirloom tomatoes, along with peppers, beans, squash and whatever else strikes our fancy.